

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

MONDAY, JULY 17, 2006

3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:06 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Chatterjee, Bloomfield, Raser present. Absent: Sullebarger, Kreider and Wallace.

MINUTES

The Historic Conservation Board unanimously approved the minutes of June 12, 2006 meeting (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Raser).

PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW, 432-434 LIBERTY HILL, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented a report on the proposed new residential construction at 432-434 Liberty Hill in the Prospect Hill Historic District. She stated the property is zoned RM-1.2 (Residential Multi-Family) and is located in a Hillside District. She gave a brief overview of the historic development of the property and stated that both lots are now vacant.

Ms. Cowden stated that the proposed three-story two-family residence would front on to Liberty Street. Residents could access the building from an entrance on Liberty Hill or a staircase from Corporation Alley. Each unit would have an interior tandem two-car garage with a coiling overhead door. Driveways leading from Liberty Hill would provide access to the garages. The exterior walls would be faced entirely with rock-cut and burnished C.M.U. The window openings would have two-over-two aluminum sash and stone sills. The third story windows on the main (south) façade feature a flat projecting sunscreen. Entrances would have simple glazed doors. She stated that it has not been determined if any Zoning Variances will be required.

Ms. Cowden stated 432-434 Liberty Hill are through lots with frontage on Corporation Alley, and it would be possible to have a detached garage along the alley. She also indicated that the rhythm and massing of the proposed building are different than other buildings on the north side of Liberty Hill.

The applicant Richard Butz, Richard Butz Design Studio, was present to answer questions. Mr. Butz stated that the proposal represents an initial design, and he welcomed the Board's comments and suggestions. He said the first floor garage allowed him to design a compact three-story structure with living space on the third floor, which will have a desirable view from that height. He stated he was willing to consider changes to the windows but that there was precedent regarding their size on Liberty Street.

Mr. Senhauser stated the more important things to consider in the proposed design are fundamentals such as balance, scale, proportion and rhythm and not detail or materiality.

Mr. Raser stated the design reads as an institutional structure and suggested that two separate pedestrian entries and relocating detached garages to the rear off Corporation Alley would provide a more inviting façade on Liberty Hill.

Mr. Bloomfield pointed out that garages such as the ones proposed have been approved in the past. Further, relocation of the garages would deny the opportunity for a view. The challenge is developing an appropriate rhythm and scale while retaining elements necessary for the success of the project.

Mr. Senhauser stated that the guidelines do not require garages to be located at the rear of a property. However, garage entrances should be designed so that the pedestrian entrance takes

precedence. He also stated that it would be possible to use an open gated parking area to provide a more pedestrian appearance and scale.

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, PARKSIDE APARTMENTS, 3315-3317 JEFFERSON AVENUE, CLIFTON

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented a report on the proposed nomination of the Parkside Apartments to the National Register of Historic Places. In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Amendments Act of 1980, the Certified Local Government (CLG) shall submit a report to the state preservation office regarding the eligibility of each property or district proposed for nomination to the National Register within its jurisdiction.

Ms. Kellam gave an overview of the history of the Parkside Apartments. She stated the nomination includes a period of significance from 1897-1956, which covers the history and development of large, upscale apartment buildings outside downtown Cincinnati by prominent developer/builder Thomas Emery's Sons. Ms. Kellam stated the property meets National Register Criteria "A" for Community Development and Planning and Criteria "C" for architecture.

Ms. Spraul-Schmidt stated there should be more content regarding the history of the development of Clifton because of the anticipation of the expansion of the streetcar line to the area and how Clifton developed as one of the first suburbs. She added that Clifton was desirable to the wealthy and the middle class and was annexed to Cincinnati in 1896. At the time Parkside Apartments were built it was just becoming acceptable for the wealthy and middle class to live in apartments nationwide. She also suggested referencing Henry Shapiro and Zane Miller's *Clifton Neighborhood and Community* and Zane Miller's *Visions of Place* and Boss Cox's *Cincinnati*.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the nomination for the Parkside Apartments 3315-3317 Jefferson Avenue does sufficiently demonstrate that this property meets the criteria under Criterion A and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Direct staff to forward the Board's findings regarding this nomination to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office prior to the August 4, 2006 meeting of the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

REPORT

William Forwood, Urban Conservator, stated at its May 22, 2006 meeting the Board directed staff to research standards/guidelines employed by other municipalities in assessing requests to demolish designated landmarks and contributing buildings in historic districts. The Board was concerned that the present requirements under the Zoning Code and individual guidelines could easily be met in most of the Historic districts, particularly in Over-the-Rhine. Mr. Forwood gave a brief overview of the current demolition requirements and provided demolition requirements from a cross-section of U.S. cities for comparison.

Mr. Raser stated although requiring multiple steps in the demolition process would possibly eliminate some of the illegitimate demolition requests, it would also possibly adversely affect legitimate projects.

Mr. Senhauser stated it would be helpful to have a greater amount of research on individual contributing buildings to determine significance. He also noted the loss of a historic structure is not just a loss to the owner but also a civic loss.

Mr. Raser suggested more stringent criteria for determining financial loss. He also said that the historic value of a building should be assigned a dollar amount, which could then be used in assessing a demolition request.

Mr. Forwood stated that changes to the demolition criteria would require a text amendment to the Zoning Code. Mr. Forwood also suggested that it might be possible to place additional requirements on the more significance portions of historic districts such as Over-the-Rhine to provide greater protection to the most sensitive areas.

Mr. Senhauser suggested Board members talk to Council Members to determine possible support or opposition to making a change in demolition criteria. If enough there is enough support then investigate making changes to the Zoning Code regarding demolition in historic districts.

ADJOURN

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser
Chairman

Date: _____